



Introduction

Over the last six years, significant mobilizations of DILG RO2 relative to disaster preparedness were implemented. These mobilizations are indications that DILG is always behind the preparedness of all Local Government Units. The DILG and the community, the Local Government Units surely make a perfect TEAM: Together Everyone Achieves More.

In support to our regional strategy #R2GETHER or Region 02 Guarantees Every Task is Harmoniously done with Excellent Result, we would like to share with you this manuscript which portrays stories of courage and unity...innate characters of humankind during extrinsic times of disaster.

Be captured by the time-being of the stories and be inspired how these people and organizations in our community motivated DILG RO2 to continue our journey together towards excellent local governance.





Photo by: OPAL E. BALA

TYPHOON FERDIE: A WAKE - UP CALL FOR IVATANS

*"...the day September 14 when super typhoon assaulted will always be remembered by every Ivatan as an eye opener to keep alive and even strengthen our resiliency. But more than this, the Ivatans will forever remember October 14 as the day when one of the best Philippine Presidents who has captured the imagination and attention of the whole world because of his distinct leadership style and speedy action came to the smallest province of Batanes most often unnoticed by many of our statesmen before, just to express our great value to him and bring in hope and inspiration to **go on with life no matter what happens...**"*

-an excerpt from the Briefing Message of **Hon. Marilou H. Cayco**, Governor of the Province of Batanes during the President Rodrigo R. Duterte's visit to Batanes on October 14, 2016 - a month after Supertyphoon Ferdie hit Batanes on September 14, 2016







FACING DISASTERS THE IVATAN WAY

Local Practices on Preparedness (Before)

"Life must go on no matter what happens". Yes. This must be the motto of every Ivatan every time a disaster hits this northernmost, least populated and smallest province in the Philippine Archipelago. This is true even long before during the time of their ancestors when no means of speedy communication technology can connect them to the mainland. There were no televisions, no internet, no facebook, instagram or twitter to get updates about the weather. There were no cellular phones even yet during those times. The only way to predict the weather is to observe the direction of the wind or the formation and changing colors of the clouds. Local fishermen get hint from the behaviour of the waves in the sea while some others even notice the action of ants and other insects.

One prominent practice that leaders in the community use in spreading important information such as the occurrence of a weather disturbance is the "Bandilyo" or information-dissemination through the use of megaphones or similar device. The information will be read aloud along streets to be heard by constituents who were prompted by the sound of the megaphone.

Upon hearing the "bandilyo" or upon knowing that an

inclement weather is approaching, local residents will start to tie the roof of their houses (locally called "kapanpet"), place "tapangko" or reinforcement to their windows and doors to safeguard their houses from strong winds and from the heavy downpour of rain. Fishermen and motorboat owners will secure their bancas to a higher portion in the locality. This is usually done through "bayanihan" or "yaru". Farmers will also secure their animals and sometimes were brought near the house for shelter and for accessibility in feeding them.

Every household ensures that there is supply of food inside the house - enough for the whole family even after the calamity because farm crops are expected to be destroyed by the typhoon. And because the weather is usually unpredictable and harsh during the months of July to December and even during the months of January and February, fishermen and other residents will preserve the rest of their catch during summertime. "Kapangulay" or drying under the heat of the sun is the traditional and common way of prolonging the shelf life of fishes and other food items. The preserved food will now be stored in the kitchen to be consumed during the rainy days. Another mode of food preservation is making "luñis" or the Ivatan way of making "adobo" which can last for months even without placing it in the refrigerator. The pork is sprinkled with salt and cooked until the oil is extracted from the meat. It is commonly stored in jars with the oil in it to serve as the preservative.

Households also ensure that there's enough petroleum gas for their lamps and batteries for their flashlights to be used during night time.

Local Practices on Response (During)

After everything is secured, family members will now stay inside their houses. Their traditional houses made out of stones, lime and cogon are their own "safe houses" and evacuation centers. If a neighbour needs help during the onslaught of a calamity, he is warmly welcomed in the house for shelter and food. Children and other family members are banned to go out to prevent accidents that may be caused by falling branches of trees and falling debris.

Local Practices on Recovery and Rehabilitation (After)

As soon as the sun rises the following day after a calamity, residents will immediately clean their surroundings, repair damages in their houses and go back to their normal lives. Farmers will check their crops and bring back their animals in the field. Fishermen and other boat owners will check their bancas and bring them back to the shore.

Because of the geographical isolation of the province from the rest of the country, independence and self-sufficiency became a way of life of the people. They do not wait for the government or from anyone outside the province for help. If there's help coming from them, then it will be a "bonus" for the residents. If there's none, it will not stop the Ivatans from living their day to day lives.





Standing again after a calamity is not hard for them because they are used to it and because they know that their relatives or kababayans or their neighbours are always there to offer their help. If something's needed to be done, the spirit of volunteerism through bayanihan or "yaru" is always present.

THE CRUELTY OF TYPHOON FERDIE

(Source: Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment Report of the RDRRMC)

Tropical Cyclone "FERDIE" with international name "Meranti" entered the Philippine Area of Responsibility with the category Severe Tropical Storm afternoon of September 11, 2016. This weather disturbance intensified further into Typhoon category as it moves closer to extreme Northern Luzon and traversing West Northwest direction impending threat to Babuyan Group of Islands and Batanes Group of Islands. Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal (TCWS) Number 1 was raised in the areas of Cagayan, Babuyan and Batanes Group of Islands by 11:00 AM of September 12, 2016.

As Typhoon Ferdie moves closer to the vicinity of Batanes, another active weather disturbance developed outside the Philippine Area of Responsibility morning of September 13, 2016, with a high possibility to develop into tropical cyclone and expected to enter within 24 hours. Moreover, Typhoon Ferdie consistently moving in West Northwest direction and maintaining its strength and threatening the Batanes Group of Islands. It is expected to be in the vicinity of Batanes by midnight to early morning of September 14, 2016. By that time, TCWS No.4 was raised over Batanes Group of Islands.

Heavy rains with gusty winds were experienced by the residents of Batanes by evening of September 13, 2016. Typhoon Ferdie by this time has maximum sustained winds of 220 kph near the center and gustiness of up to 255 kph. With these characteristics, it is expected to cause severe damage to the area. Prior to landfall, many trees started to uproot, windows shattered, structures started to break and communication was downed. By 12:15 AM of September 14,

2016, Typhoon Ferdie made landfall over Itbayat Island. The island was left isolated with all means of communication and transportation unavailable.

At the same time, Batan Island located south of Itbayat experienced similar impact of Typhoon Ferdie. Both islands suffered serious damages in agriculture, infrastructure, environment and lifelines (water, electricity and communication) that justified the declaration of the province under a state of calamity under Resolution No. 57 dated September 15, 2016.

Augmentation from the national government and non-government organizations for relief operations and damage assessment reached the Batan Island. The Rapid Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis Team (RDANA), together with the Rapid Emergency Telecommunication Team (RETT) and Medical Team of RDRRMC2 arrived in the area on September 17, 2016 with a mission to attend to the immediate needs of the province and to reiterate the necessities for fast recovery.

How the Ivatans are affected

(From the briefing message of Governor Cayco during President Duterte's visit)

1. The 4,738 families comprising the 17, 246 total population of the entire province were all affected by the typhoon;
2. There were 16 families that comprised the 96 evacuees taken to the designated evacuation center at the height of the typhoon. After the typhoon, the rest of the evacuees went back to their respective homes to save and put up again whatever was left of their properties, while 6 families stayed in the evacuation center as rehabilitation of their houses were in progress;
3. There were 12 reported to have suffered minor injuries because of falling debris including 2 visiting tourists who sought treatment at the Batanes General Hospital while 10 others were treated in their homes.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF DAMAGES PER SECTOR:

SOCIAL SECTOR		Amount (in pesos)
a. Totally and partially damaged residential houses		75,745,624.00
	Sub-total	75,745,624.00
BASIC SERVICES		
a. Food and Waterworks system		29,928,000.00
b. Power and electricity system		51,417,980.04
c. Health and sanitation		21,479,870.58
	Sub-total	102,826,350.62
EDUCATION		
a. School buildings		25,189,837.08
b. Machineries, vehicles and equipment		12,443,748.00
c. Office supplies and materials		3,952,550.99
	Sub-total	41,586,136.07
COMMUNICATION FACILITIES		
a. DOST-PAGASA		100,000,000.00
b. Radio and aviation stations		5,656,000.00
c. Telecommunications		2,708,000.00
	Sub-total	108,364,000.00
INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT SERVICES		
a. Government buildings		67,947,214.00
b. Seaports and retaining walls, roads and bridges		182,207,829.36
	Sub-total	250,155,044.14
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT		
a. Crops/nursery and fences		46,249,696.00
b. Livestock/nursery and fences		31,000,000.00
c. Fisheries/gears and bancas		19,703,000.00
d. Forestry/nursery and seedlings		3,629,408.00
	Sub-total	100,582,104.00
TRADE AND INDUSTRIES		
a. Business establishments		150,000,000.00
	Sub-total	150,000,000.00
OTHER LOSSES AND DAMAGES		
a. Office supplies, equipment and properties		620,000,000.00
	Sub-total	620,000,000.00
RELIGIOUS SECTOR		
a. Church buildings		6,017,554.50
	Sub-total	6,017,554.50
	Grand total	835,265,313.33.

What caused the enormous damage to houses?

Everyone was shocked about the massive destruction brought about by Typhoon Ferdie to this well-known typhoon-resilient province. Are the days gone that after a typhoon, people can immediately start living their normal lives? Yes, damages to infrastructures, facilities, crops and other agricultural products are inevitable but the extent of damage it caused to residential houses is somewhat alarming.

Besides the very strong winds of the typhoon that reached 295 kph near the center and gustiness of up to 350 kph and the enormous amount of rain that it produced, there are also issues that aggravated the damage to properties. Some of these are the following:

1. Use of light materials in building houses. From the report of the Governor, most of the damaged houses are those made out of commercial wood or those that can be bought in construction shops or stores that do not meet the required strength needed by a typical Ivatan house to withstand the usual exceptional strong weather disturbances that regularly ply the Batanes route. On the other hand, those houses that are made out of known local hardwood had very minimal or no damage at all. That's why one of her plea to the President is the temporary suspension or exemption from the Total Log Ban in forest zones being implemented by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

2. Diminishing number of stone houses. During the old times, Ivatan people build stone houses made out of cogon roof and meter-thick walls to adapt to the very strong typhoons that

regularly hit the province. However, because of modernization, local residents started to use modern materials in building their houses- some are sturdy, some are not. There are still stone houses today but some were totally damaged when a strong earthquake hit the province some years ago.

3. Very expensive cost of building materials. In order to build a sturdy house nowadays, you have to spend thousands of pesos to pay for laborers and to buy cement, steel bars, sand, gravel and other construction materials that are imported from the mainland. It is really "painful" on the pockets of the Ivatan people because the landing prices of goods and commodities is not only twice the price from the mainland but thrice or even ten times more expensive! During the earlier times, one can just get sand and gravel from the shore for his needs but due to the declaration of the entire province as Protected Landscapes and Seascapes, the government made regulations on its use.

4. Weakening Ivatan tradition on preparedness. Some people admitted that they have not tied their roofs that caused them to be homeless for some days. Others did not place "tapangko" or reinforcement to their doors and windows that caused strong winds and rainwater to destroy their properties.

VP Leni's arrival

Exactly five (5) days after Typhoon Ferdie smashed the tiny Province of Batanes, the Ivatans were able to see a flicker of hope to rise again after the disaster when the second most important person in the country, Vice President Maria Leonora "Leni" G. Robredo went to personally see the damages brought about by the typhoon. She was welcomed by Congresswoman



Henedina R. Abad, Governor Marilou H. Cayco, Vice Governor Ronald A. Aguto, SP Members, Municipal Mayors, Municipal Vice Mayors, SB Members, Punong Barangays and the members of the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (PDRRMC). A very short program was held at the Human Resource Training Center of the Provincial Capitol. It was highlighted by the presentation of the damages by the Governor and the Congresswoman. VP Leni shared a short message and expressed her empathy to the people of Batanes. Being the Chairman of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Center (HUDCC), she assured the Ivatans leaders that she will fast track the aid from the National Government. She also went for a short visit in the island of Itbayat, where Typhoon Ferdie made landfall on September 14, 2016 that caused several residents homeless.

President Duterte's visit

Meanwhile, exactly a month after Typhoon Ferdie hit Batanes, the very prominent and tough-talking President of the Republic of the Philippines came to show his love and support to the Ivatans through his very short but very meaningful visit to this small province. He was accompanied by Secretary Benjamin Diokno of DBM, Secretary Mark Villar of DPWH, and Secretary Judy Taguiwalo of DSWD. President Duterte made a history by being the first President to visit Batanes after a typhoon (Batanes is known to be a typhoon belt).

The crowd composed of students, teachers, government officials and employees, businessmen, families with totally and partially-damaged houses and other constituents gathered in the morning of October 14, 2016 at the Old Tennis Court located in front of the Provincial Capitol. Everyone's excited about the President's arrival. They do not mind the scorching heat of the sun or even the pouring of the rain (weather is not good because of an approaching typhoon) just to secure a seat in which they will be able to see and hear the President.

After hours of waiting, President Duterte finally arrived. As he went off the vehicle he was riding, people screamed for joy. To the Ivatans, a President's visit to their homeland means the world to them, especially in times of crisis. Here is an excerpt from the briefing message of the Governor:

"Today, we have just proven one thing: that for President Duterte, size does not matter, that even if our total population of 17, 246 equivalent to an ordinary barangay in the Metropolis, the President will come by all means if only to give importance to us and show his love for us Ivatans especially when we needed him most!"

The very short program was, of course, highlighted by the message of the President. He said that he brought with him some members of his cabinet to look into the needs of the province- the Budget Secretary to look into the appropriate funds, DPWH

Secretary for the Infrastructure needs, and the DSWD Secretary for the immediate food and housing needs. He wants the speedy release of assistance for the recovery and rehabilitation of the province.

He also talked about his policy on the 3-day processing of government transactions and of course his serious fight against illegal drugs.

There was also a ceremonial distribution of the cash assistance for those with totally and partially-damaged houses which was awarded by the President himself.

The pouring-in of help

Despite the very limited resources that the provincial, municipal and barangay Local Government Units of Batanes had after Ferdie, typhoon assistance of different kinds was given to the calamity-stricken people of Batanes.

A lot of relief goods including generator sets were delivered to the Province via the C130 aircraft of the Philippine Air Force. Relief goods came from DSWD, GMA 7 Kapuso Foundation, ABS-CBN Sagip Kapamilya and other donors.

The One Meralco Foundation, Cagayan Electric Cooperative, Isabela Electric Cooperative and the Kalinga Electric Cooperative also came to help the Batanes Electric Cooperative restore the electricity in the province. The estimated 2-month restoration of electricity was shortened to 2 weeks (in some parts) because of their help.

The Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA)

A post-disaster assessment (PDA) is a multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary structured approach for assessing disaster impacts and prioritising recovery and reconstruction needs.

On October 3-12, 2016, a team composed of representatives from different government agencies conducted a Post-Disaster Needs Assessment in the six (6) municipalities of Batanes.

Participating agencies included the Office of the Civil Defense (OCD) Regional Office 02 (lead agency), National Economic Development Authority (NEDA), National Housing Authority (NHA), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of Agriculture (DA), Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR), Department of Education (DepEd), Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Department of Health (DOH), National Telecommunications Commission (NTC), Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Tourism (DOT), Department of Energy (DOE), and Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE).

The result of the PDNA shall be the basis of the rehabilitation efforts to be implemented by different government agencies and other funding institutions.

Maintaining the "Zero Casualty"

Batanes, located at the northernmost tip of the country, usually serves as the exit point of several typhoons that enter the Philippine Area of Responsibility every year. But in the history of the Ivatans, no casualty has ever been recorded.

Primitive as they seem to be, but their local practices are even used by the Ivatans nowadays - very old and indigenous ways but are worthy to be enliven for the use and appreciation of the younger generations. They are simple and ancient traditions that probably be the reason why Ivatans are saved every time a disaster occurs.

We can therefore conclude that their local practices including their stone houses plus adherence to government instructions are their secret weapons to survival.



SELFLESSNESS IN ADVERSITY

To help someone is an ordinary act, it is even innate to us. But to help someone to the extent of possibly losing your own life is a selfless act. Opportunities to portray such selfless acts come rarely but what matters is that we are prepared to take it when that opportunity comes face to face with us. It is in times of disaster that the fire of humanity's goodwill flares in one's heart. It is when little deed of kindness ripples to the benefit of the whole.

It was month of October 2016 when Typhoon Karen hit the areas of Central and Northern Luzon. It brought massive destruction to these areas especially in the agricultural sector wherein most residents rely their source of living. In the aftermath of the typhoon, early in the morning, a man tried to salvage the remains in his farmland and gather goods that could sustain his family for the day. In the eagerness of Mr. Marvin V. Garcia, a resident of Barangay Pogonsino, Bagabag Nueva Vizcaya, to gather a swayed log, he tried to get across the raging Magat River. The strong current of the river left him incapable of turning back to the bank and led him swung by the flow until he reached a mass of land formed at the middle of the river. He called for help as much as he can. Hours have passed until it reached late in the afternoon when a group of people huddled in the bank. People who have seen him were hesitant to respond to his call for help because the water level continued to rise until it was seen impossible to cross. Garcia also suffered from leg cramps which made it even more difficult for him to return. Despite this, he remained hopeful that someone will be brave enough to get across and assist him get back to the bank safely.

Onlookers called the Chief Tanod, Pablo P. Noble, who responded immediately and requested assistance from the Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Officer (MDRRMO) Oscar M. Nava through Punong Barangay Jimmy O. Licupa of Barangay Pogonsino. Members of the Philippine National Police (PNP), Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) and Philippine Red Cross are not remiss on their duty and came upon receipt of a call from the MDRRMO. However, the transportation of rescue equipment took longer than the usual time considering the difficulty to travel in the very rough and muddy road leading to the site in addition to the heavy downpour. Until a man decided to help Garcia. A seasoned fisherfolk and a good swimmer, Mr. Ariel C. Dumo, decided to cross the river knowing and seeing the danger that can be caused by the rising water level with the river current continually increasing in strength. Dumo, also a resident of the barangay, bravely withstood and crossed the raging river with the support of two (2) large water containers which served as his floaters. When he finally reached the spot where Garcia was, he gave him one of the containers and assist him as they cross to the bank making use of their remaining ounce of strength to fight the current until they got into safety. Immediately upon reaching the bank, the rescue team readily provided assistance.

"Kanayun ko met nga ub-ubraen diyay agbal-lasiw ti karayan ngem damok ti mangsalbar ti tao (although I have been crossing the river for many times, it's my first time to save someone)", Dumo shared.

This is a story of a man who took that opportunity to extend a helping hand selflessly. Someone who chose to risk his own life to save the life of another not looking through the selfish lens of this world whether he may be getting something in return for his act or not. There are those who choose to sacrificially extend a hand for help to people who may have less of the comforts of this life- these are the real unsung heroes.

Today, Dumo may be existing silently but to someone who has been given the second chance to live because of his selfless act, he is a resounding testimony of humanity's goodwill.

SECOND LIFE. Marvin V. Garcia with his daughter share his story of survival after the onslaught of Typhoon Karen.





All smile from Garcia together with his family after the interview with them. Behind them is their home.



Ariel C. Dumo shares how he was able to save Garcia in the raging Magat River.



Dumo standing with chief tanod Pablo P. Noble, delighted of having been able to share not just a story but a legacy even to his son.



Members of the PNP, BFP and Philippine Red Cross and concerned citizens as they wait for the arrival of Dumo and Garcia.



Personnel from the Philippine Red Cross examine Garcia (center) upon reaching the bank.







THE UNSUNG HERO. Dumo (center), upon reaching the bank, was inspected by OIC-Municipal Fire Marshall FO3 Ruben R. Tugade (rightmost)



A closer look of the portion of the raging Magat River where the incident happened.



A closer look of the portion of the raging Magat River where the incident happened.



A closer look of the residence of Garcia.



LGU, NGAs AND BARANGAYS: Mitiga



ting Disaster Risks Hand- in- Hand



In 2014, Camalaniugan organized Rescue 3510 pursuant to Republic Act no. 10121 otherwise known as the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010. Being a fourth (4th) Class municipality with scarce financial resources to employ individuals as members of the rescue team, Mayor Isidro T. Cabaddu, together with Engr. Alexander S. Carrera, OIC-DRRMO, needed to think of ways to add personnel required to form the Rescue Team.

With the DRRM Act mandating LGUs to mobilize individuals or organized volunteers to augment the Rescue Team's personnel complement and logistical requirements, LGU-Camalaniugan tapped the support of the Liga ng mga Barangay (LnB) for the additional manpower. The LGU then brought this up with the LnB and notices were posted in every barangay urging for Rescue Volunteers. Barangay Tanods were given priority to join the team. On the deadline, 12 barangays gladly obliged and accepted the challenge, each sending either a Sangguniang Barangay Member or a Barangay Tanod to complement the understaffed Rescue 3510.

To date, Rescue 3510 is staffed with 18 rescuers composed of 12 Barangay Officials (Sangguniang Barangay Member and Barangay Tanod volunteers), two (2) representatives from the PNP, two (2) representatives from the BFP and two (2) representatives from the MPDO. Headed by Engr. Carrera, Rescue 3510 is comprised mostly of volunteer barangay officials from various barangays who render services from 5 pm to 8 am during their white alert and 24/7 service in times of typhoon and other disasters.

Preparedness for Effective Response

To better respond to incoming disasters, the volunteer-rescuers had to temporarily leave their families to undergo a rigorous emergency response training which encompassed knowledge on first aid and basic water search and rescue, among others. They had invested countless hours into learning about navigation, communications, tactics and first aid.

They were also provided with equipment to be used during emergencies such as rescue boats, spine boards, ropes, life vests, safety helmets and lifebuoys -all to ensure that they are geared with enough apparatus to help save lives.

Rescuers on-the-go

When a typhoon hits the municipality, it is always almost automatic that they meet and organize themselves at the DRRM Operation Center for the activation of their pre-evacuation protocols. To increase the awareness of the hazards within the municipality, Rescue 3510 has also helped put communications protocols in place to assist in the dissemination of information during emergencies.

One of the few notable experiences they had was their rescue operation at Dappat, Dacalla-Fugu sometime in 2015 when they had to evacuate the Comanes Family as the floodwater had risen to an exceptionally high level. It is on such circumstances that they reinforce their mantra and be encouraged to throw on their packs, head off and risk their lives to save others even if they are neither a relative nor a friend.

Even during clearing operations, they also get injured but these tend to be ignored because the safety and security of people are put on the forefront.





The members of Rescue 3510 valiantly pull families out from their severely flooded homes.



Life on the search and rescue team

As volunteer-rescuers, one of the biggest challenges is putting a premium on the needs of the majority rather than your own family. Many of them are from far barangays and in times of disaster, they know that they have sworn to serve the public by being at the operations center and assisting to those in need. They understand that when a storm is expected to pass through the locality, they need to be on-duty a day or two before its expected arrival. They also realize that despite the menial travel allowance they get as compensation, they still need to extend services for the people. Without any vehicle provided by the LGU primarily utilized by the rescue team, they had to use their own.

They even sacrifice vacation days and times for their kids' school work either to go on a duty, do a roundabout in the vulnerable barangays or evacuate families stricken by severe flooding -all in the exigency of service.

It is very evident that Rescue 3510 has a long way to go in terms of being very operational and functional. The members themselves acknowledge that they still need to be trained on search and rescue procedures. In fact, they knew that there is a need for a dedicated vehicle for rescue operations and that there is a need to augment the communication equipment. But despite the glaring inadequacies, members of Rescue 3510 compensate it with the undying and unwavering spirit of a rescuer.



LGOOs II Trainees Tedrick Eivanz F. Danao and Blessing Grace V. Ganitano pose with the members of Rescue 3510 who are on duty during the scheduled interview.



LGOO II Blessing Grace V. Ganitano inspects the functionality and completeness of the team's search and rescue equipment.



LnB Municipal Federation President Jamuel O. Rosario probes OIC-DRRMO Alexander S. Carrera regarding the pre-emptive evacuation conducted by Rescue 3510 against Super Typhoon 'Lawin'.

RESCUER'S PROFILE			
GROUP NO.	NAME	ADDRESS	CONTACT NO.
1	REV EUGENIA	CASHI	0905-738-8174
	MARK DAVE UJANO	PUSINA	0935-682-7835
2	ROGELIO AVENDANIO	GEN. E. BAYALLA	0935-773-2719
	NOEL VERDO	DIAGO	0905-282-6164
3	JOMA CALLUENG	CENTRO NORTE	0920-250-2150
	JOEL ALBAIRA	CENTRO SUR	0900-828-0741
4	FELIPE URBANOZO	BULALA	0935-198-9157
	DOMINADOR CALIBISO	BANTAY	0935-548-6398
5	ABIEL DOMINGO	BAGGAO	0906-972-6000
	RANDY ANDRES	AGUNI	0905-749-1576
6	NOLAN MALANOT	FELIPE TUPON	0900-943-2320
	JOSEPH DANCEL	CAYOTORAN SUR	0915-312-5721



The photo shows the profile of the 12 volunteer-rescuers from the 12 barangays of the municipality.

Members of Rescue 3510 respond to a fatal car wreck brought by a fallen tree during the occurrence of a disaster.

PDRRMC ISABELA: Two-Time National Gawad KALASAG Awardee



The Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office of the Province of Isabela, the heart of disaster preparedness, mitigation and response.

Gawad Kalasag, or KALamidad at SAKuna LABanan, SARiling Galing ang Kaligtasan, is the country's annual recognition scheme in its search for excellence in the fields of Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) and humanitarian action.

PDRRMC Isabela is a two-time National Gawad KALASAG Awardee (2014-2015) and three-time regional awardee (2014-2016), a confirmation of its aptitude in being the province's prime DRRM Implementer and Rescue Group. It boasts of adept personnel on disaster preparedness and rescue operations, state of the art equipment and facilities and motor vehicles available for whatever emergency needs of the people.

The desire of the PLGU to mainstream

DRRM programs is truly remarkable as can be gleaned from the programs and projects it continues to implement in support of DRR management.

On disaster prevention and mitigation, the PLGU has institutionalized actions for disaster prevention and mitigation, hazard and vulnerability maps are available for earthquake, flood and susceptible areas for rain induced landslides. Early warning systems are in place for specific hazards in the locality such as flood, typhoon, earthquake, distant tsunami and fire and preparedness actions are coupled with various issuances on environmental protection as well as the conduct of regular environment conservation measures. Among the more significant issuances released is Ordinance No. 08, series of 2011 entitled, "An Ordinance Prohibiting the

Dispensing of Intoxicating Beverages and the likes Through Sale, Purchase or Gift Immediately Before, During and After a Tropical Storm (Typhoon) Surge." The issuance aims to prevent the happening of any untoward incident during calamities which may be attributed to intoxication, this is strictly adhered to in the entire Province of Isabela.

On disaster preparedness, aside from skills acquired from intensive DRRM and rescue operation trainings the PDRRMC is equipped with state of the art water rescue, extrication, water sanitation, transportation, communication and personal protection equipment. Among the cutting-edge equipment the PDRRMC is equipped with are the following:

Text Blast Machine

This equipment is used to send text



Interview with Mr. Marlo S. Angel of PDRRMO regarding the disaster preparation and mitigation of the Province of Isabela



Mr. Romanico D. Daguio and Mr. Marlo S. Angel show the DART Survival Kit and its contents while explaining their significance in times of disaster.

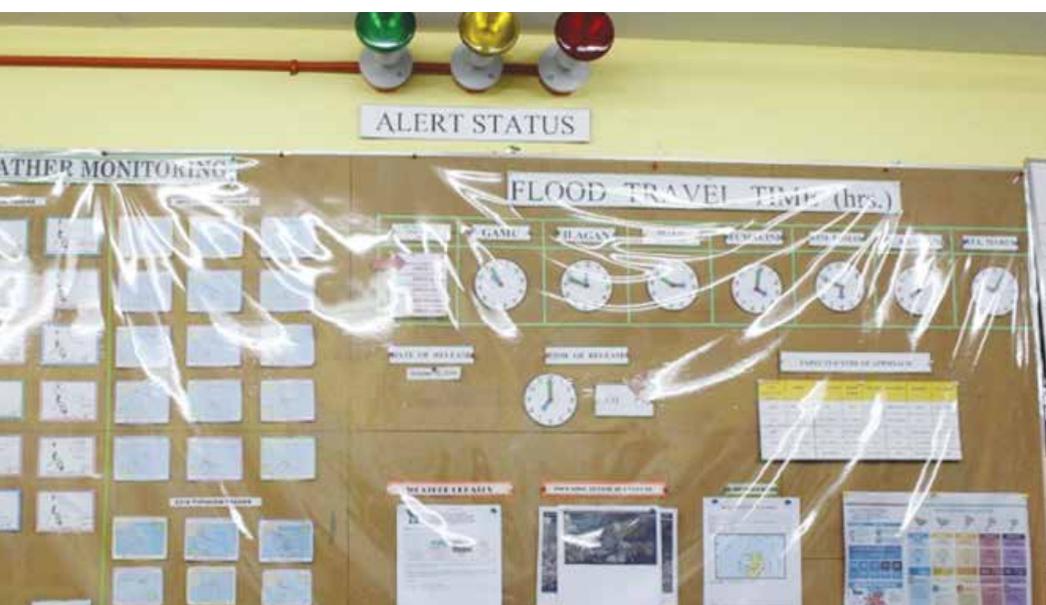
messages to all people living within 5 kilometer radius of the machine regardless of the network provider of the mobile phone owner. It has its own built-in cell site and can send messages to all networks even when network cell sites are down.

Once connected to the internet, it can detect the exact location of the person being texted, hence, it can also be used to detect location of persons trapped in collapsed buildings and similar situations through their mobile phones.

Portable Oxygen Tanks
This is a storage vessel for oxygen which is either held under pressure in gas cylinder or as liquid oxygen in a cryogenic storage tank. It is used to store gas for medical breathing gas in medical facilities and even for home use. It allows for a broad range of mobility for it is lightweight and compact and is simply more discreet and convenient to carry when you are on-the-go.

Solar Powered Water Purifier

This device is able to completely operate as an independent stand-alone system without the need of an outside electrical power source. It is a portable water treatment system which uses a solar electrical producing panel attached to the top of the frame and a 12 volt deep cycle battery, it can produce approximately 1,000 gallons (3,700 liters) maximum of



The weather monitoring and flood travel bulletin board of the Isabela PDRRMC used to monitor weather development and flood water travel time in the province of Isabela.

purified water per day.

The Solar Powered Water Purifier was used in a remote barangay in Palo, Province of Leyte shortly after Super Typhoon Yolanda pummeled Eastern Visayas in November 2013. It was brought there by the PDRRMC as part of their outreach for Typhoon Yolanda victims.

Porta Bote

A portabote (also called foldboat, foldboat, folding boat, Porta-Boot, or portabote, all registered trademarks) is a type of small recreational boat that folds to 4 inches (10.16 centimetres) flat for storage and transport and it can be assembled to as fast as five minutes. The Porta-Bote is lightweight, flexible and extremely strong, it is made of copolymer polypropylene, a material that offers outstanding physical, mechanical, thermal and electrical properties due to this it has better crack resistance and toughness. These unique features make the Porta-Bote a must have equipment by professional users such as rescue teams and leisure users as well.

Hydraulic Rescue Tools

The Hydraulic Rescue Tools are used by emergency rescue personnel to assist in extrication of crash victims brought about by vehicular accidents, as well as other emergency situations involving enclosed and small spaces. These tools include cutters, spreaders, door busters and rams. Hydraulic rescue tools are powered by a hydraulic pump, which can

be hand, foot, or engine-powered or even built into the tool. These tools may be either single-acting, wherein hydraulic pressure will only move the cylinder in one direction and the starting position is accomplished using a pressure-relief valve and spring setup, or dual-acting, in which hydraulic pressure is used to open and close the hydraulic cylinder.

On disaster response, the PDRRMC utilizes all avenues of communication that it even utilizes the social media by maintaining facebook (FB) accounts for the PDRRMC as well as its rescue operations arm DART 831. This way, netizens may get in touch with the organization even through social media. Not only are the FB accounts used as a means of communicating emergencies it also serves as a platform for DRRM related announcements, advertisement of programs and activities and advocacy campaigns. As to reporting, the team conducts real time reporting through channels with other local DRRM teams.

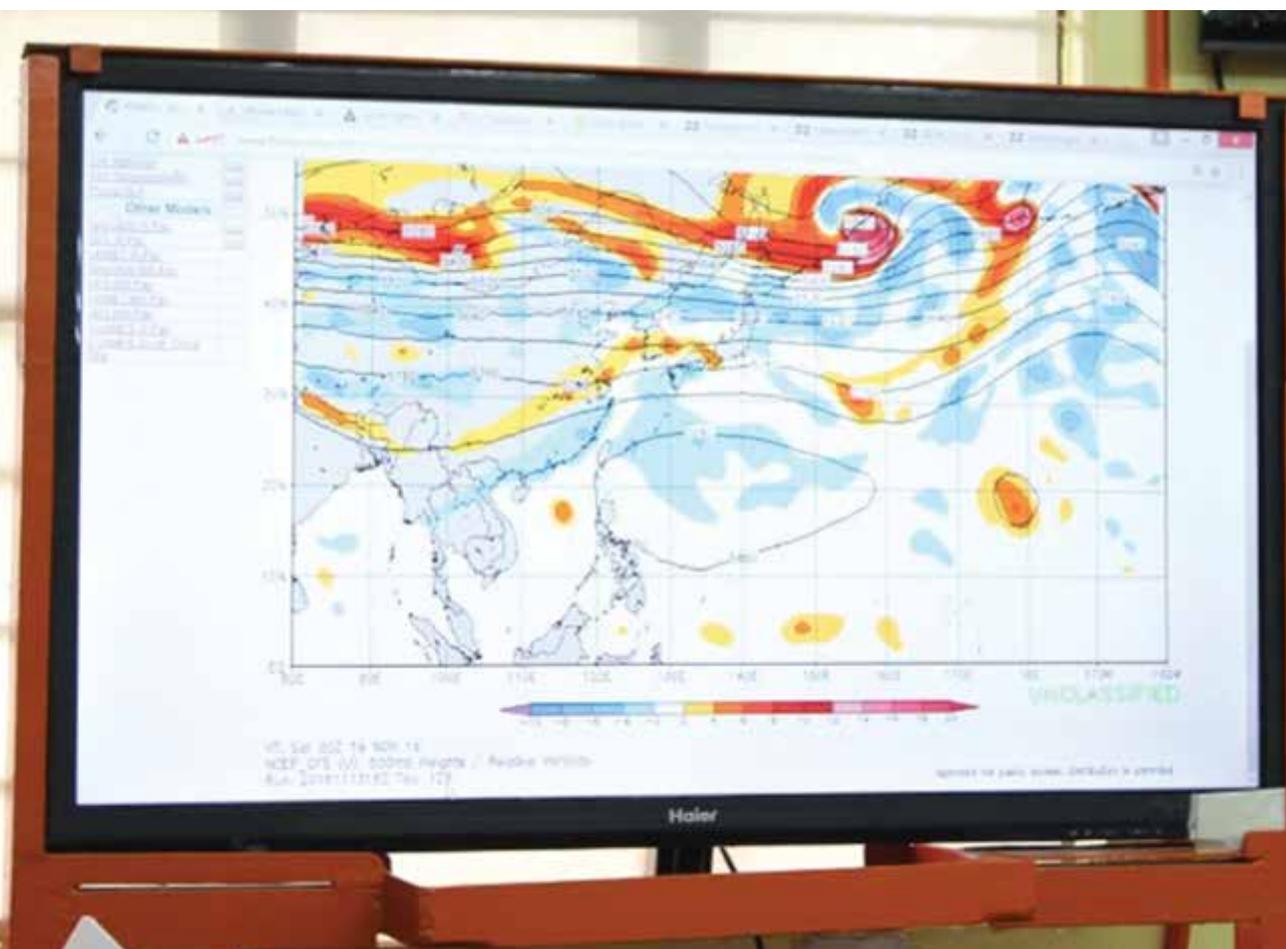
On recovery and rehabilitation, the conduct of a Post Disaster and Needs Assessment (PDNA) is used for restoration programs through the Core Shelter Assistance Project (CSAP).

The PDRRMC maneuvers with the catchphrase, "To Save Lives" and with their programs on disaster prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery and rehabilitation this motto is fulfilled whatever disaster the Province of Isabela may face.

Cutter-spreader, saw blade and chain saw used for rescue and other disaster operations. The equipment are regularly tested and maintained for to make sure that they do not hamper operations.



The warehouse of the Isabela PDRRMC where all the equipment of PDRRMC Isabela are kept and maintained for fast deployment and optimum condition and performance.



Real-time weather update via satellite imaging used by the PDRRMO Isabela to track the path of natural calamities such as storms and typhoons. Information gathered is used to plan for disaster mitigation and strategic placement and deployment of resources.



Rescue backpacks containing essential treatment kits for various conditions and situations hang inside the PDRRMC warehouse ready for deployment 24/7.



Inside the backpack are kits for first aid, trauma, burns, airway and many more essentials for first and/or rapid response to any and all kinds of situations.





Mr. Romanico D. Daguio shows one of the kits inside the rescue backpack. He also explains that before every shift, outgoing teams refill used supplies and materials and aa turnover procedure is done by the teams to make sure that everything is accounted for and ready for action.



Portable water filtration devices on standby 24/7 to be deployed to areas where potable water supply is scarce or non-existent. These devices are able to provide enough potable water for a few households and ensure that water-borne disease are avoided.



This tool is used to transport injured persons quickly. It greatly reduces the possibility of aggravating the condition of persons during transport.



One of the ambulances of PDRRM Isabela. Inside this modern marvel of medical technology, cutting edge equipment is strategically placed for fast access during emergency. This ambulance is essential to make sure that the patients are treated properly on site in case of minor medical conditions or to prolong life while being transported for treatment in a suitable health facility.



Heavy duty and powerful boat engines which is attached to the fiber glass boats are maintained and always ready for use anytime. These engines greatly help rescue operations by cutting the time and strength rescuers spend navigating through the waters to get to their destination.



Portable water filtration devices on standby 24/7 to be deployed to areas where potable water supply is scarce or non-existent. These devices are able to provide enough potable water for a few households and ensure that water-borne disease are avoided.



Fiber glass boat assembled in just a few minutes. This tough boat that the PDRRM Isabela procured can wade through waters ridden with barb wires, thorns and all kinds of sharp objects, which would otherwise quickly disable inflatable boats, without any problems.



One of the firetrucks of PDRRM Isabela. These vehicles help fight against fires and in performing some rescue operations being done by the Disaster Action Response Team.







PDRRMC ISABELA: Two-Time National Gawad KALASAG Awardee

A family was left homeless, yet was better bonded as the grandmother had proven how much she could do for the love she has for her grandchildren during a fire incident in the municipality of Saguday.

The scenic town of Saguday is the smallest among the six towns of the Province of Quirino where life is simple, accidents are few and far between; so rare, that one grandmother believed they happen only to faraway people she watches on the news. But all these beliefs and complacency were swept out in the morning of August 27, 2016.

Aling Letty Buhongan is a 54 year old resident of Purok Saranay, Magsaysay, Saguday, Quirino who goes about her daily routine of watching over her grandchildren: seven-year old Hannah and five-year old Harold.

One fine morning, as it was nearing midday, Aling Letty decided to cook for lunch. She started to make fire using a lighter then washed and prepared the rice outside. Unknown to her, Harold played with the lighter and unexpectedly threw it into the fire which caused the instant ball of flame that engulfed the kitchen. As it was made of wood and bamboo, other parts of the house were soon in flames too.

Aling Letty ran fast to save the two children. She tried really hard but she couldn't get them out. The terrified grandmother had burns on her hands and arms trying to get into the house. Fear and panic gripped her as she searched for the children amidst the ghastly suffocating smoke. As soon as she found them, she completely covered her grandchildren. The kids were safely nestled underneath the heroic Aling Letty. She used her body to shield the kids from the flame. She jumped and rushed towards the door as the fire engulfed the whole area really fast. She tried pushing her way through the door but the harder for them to get out. After several tries, she finally reached the door but she was already too weak. If Aling Letty and her grandchildren got stranded inside the house for few seconds more, they could have died from suffocation and heat.

Neighbors could do nothing to extinguish

the fire due to the newly installed electricity that may cause greater danger. Aling Letty tried to save some of their properties and the little amount of money she kept, but to no avail. She suffered first degree burn at her right arm and shoulder. She and her grandchildren were brought to the Quirino Provincial Medical Center for proper guidance, general checkup and treatment where she was advised for a continuous medication. "I just did what I had to do. If it meant I would die, so be it," she later said. And then she added, "In the confusion, I suddenly recalled that in case of fire, we were supposed to lie as close to the ground as possible, because it's where the oxygen is. Some personnel from the municipal hall told us during one barangay assembly day. It's what I did."

The incident was very traumatic for the victims most especially for Aling Letty. Her loved ones were saved but none of their properties were retained. According to her, she can't imagine if something tragic happened to her grandchildren who were just left by her daughter working in the Middle East. The unfortunate event left a big scar in the consciousness of the family. It may take a long time for them to get back on their feet. Left without a shelter, Aling Letty and her grandchildren are now living in Diffun, Quirino with her daughter.

Aling Letty is no extraordinary person. She is an old woman living the usual and simple way in the town of Saguday. She didn't have any training experiences on rescue operations and other disaster related skills but she had proven more than enough that age and inadequacy of trainings is not a hindrance to do a heroic story of saving persons stuck in a disaster. Yes, knowledge and skills on rescue operations, disaster prevention and resiliency are vital elements in disaster risk reduction management. Nonetheless, it is still overshadowed by courage and willingness to volunteer to do a heroic act during the emergence of disaster. The said fire incident left her family homeless, but better bonded by her immeasurable act of love for her grandchildren.



DISASTER RELIEF



4Ps to Safety: San Mateo LDRRMC's Guide to Disaster Preparedness

The Local Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (LDRRMC) of San Mateo believes that in order to combat the challenges brought about by disaster, one must Pray, Plan, Prepare and Practice to be safe and ready in times of disaster. This belief had constantly inspired the LGU Officials and council members in coming up with programs that address issues commonly faced by the people in the municipality.

San Mateo is a first class municipality with a population of 64,505. It is located in the southwestern part of Isabela with a total area of approximately 12,059.83 hectares. Aside from being the "Munggo capital of the Philippines", San Mateo is gearing to become the Philippines' first Agro-ecological City. It has been conferred the 2016 Seal of Good Local Governance (SGLG) and it is worthy to note that it passed all the core and essential elements including that on Disaster Management. The LDRRMC is composed of 18 personnel with background and training in rescue operations, disaster preparedness and basic incident command system. The equipment available and skills of the team who also form part of the Rescue 24 Hours

Action Center Task Force (HACTAF) make the LDRRMC, the number one agency in the municipality for any emergency situation.

PRAY. The LGU established the Prayer Room in the Municipal Hall and employees are fortified to practice a prayer habit at 4:30 PM every day. During this time the employees are allowed to leave their official stations for reasons of going to the prayer room. As Christians, the habit of praying is encouraged and as part of the LGU's cause, the people are asked to pray for safety and protection against any disaster not only for themselves but for the entire municipality as well.

PLAN. The LGU is equipped with plans wherein Disaster Risk Reduction Climate Change Adaptation (DRR CCA) is mainstreamed such as the DRRM Plan, Local Climate Change Action Plan (LCCAP), Evacuation Plan, Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) and other related plans. These plans provide for programs which the LGU will implement in order to address issues on disaster prevention and mitigation.

PREPARE. The LGU follows disaster protocols institutionalized through Operation Listo on the early preparedness actions. During typhoons, among the

preparedness protocols being practiced is the dissemination of information using the public address system established in 6 strategic places (i.e. Municipal Grounds, Old Centro Proper, Sinamar Norte, Barangay 2, San Roque and Bagong Sikat) for regular updates on the water level and release of the Magat Dam. This device serves as an effective early warning system in getting the residents of identified hazard prone areas updated during calamities.

Vehicular accidents being one of the common emergency situations being responded to by Rescue 24 HACTAF, the LGU came up with "Ilaw Mo, Kaligtasan Ko Program", a road safety program in partnership with the Rotary Club of San Mateo Balatong (RCSMB). The municipality as an agriculture center town is understandably bursting with farm machineries more popularly known as "kuliglig" and "kulong-kulong", which are accident prone and have caused a number of road mishaps especially along the national highway. The program encouraged owners to present their farm machineries to the LGU for the putting up of reflectorized stickers. This simple act serves as protection not only to the farm machinery owners and passengers but



OF PREPARATION













motorists as well. As of date, the program has benefited 104 operators and resulted to the decrease in road accidents involving farm machineries, hence, it has become a continuing program of the LGU.

Another program of the LGU is the “Bahay Mo, Aayusin Ko Program”, or “Adopt A House Program” which is in partnership with the RCSMB, Inner Wheel Club of San Mateo and the Rural Bank of San Mateo, basically, the recipients are indigent families who are in need of decent housing. Most of the families lived in houses that need to be rehabilitated and reconstructed making them vulnerable to disaster. The program has three phases namely: floor concreting, sawali walling and galvanized roofing. The project started in 2013 and to this date 622 safe and

decent houses had been constructed, the LGU and the LDRRMC continue to advertise the project so as to encourage other partners to support the program increasing the number of families with disaster resilient houses.

On fire safety, the LGU and LDRRMC in partnership with the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) came up with the installation of fire hydrants in the public market. This is the LGU’s way of having a ready source of water in case of fire accident in the municipality.

PRACTICE. The LDRRMC continue to hone their abilities through various trainings which include simulation drills for them to master their skills in case of disaster. Aside from this, citizen awareness through information and education campaigns are also one of their important roles to ensure that the community



is well informed and prepared on what to do when faced with emergency situations.

Another program being implemented by the LGU through the LDRRMC which involve the community is the regular conduct of the "Magat Dam Break Drill Program". Under this program, barangays vulnerable to possible effects of the break of the Magat Dam undergo a drill in order for them to know what to do when the unexpected disaster happens. These are vulnerable barangays most likely to be affected by any damage to the dam or those that will be hit first in case of water release from the dam which can pose harm to the residents.

The strength of the LDRRMC is attributed to the support of LGU officials led by Mayor Crispina R. Agcaoili, MD and

Vice-Mayor Roberto C. Agcaoili and the Members of the Sanggunian, whose partnership fuels the vision of the council of becoming a competent rescue team during emergency situations. This vision is with the backing of their mission to save lives and provide immediate response to any emergency situation whether natural or man-made. Having been recognized for its outstanding performance in the regional level for 1st-3rd class municipalities on the Project Prepare Awards, the LDRRMC through LDRRMO Romeo R. Salvador continues to perform at its best as it is again a contender for the same award for 2016.

Rescue 24 HACTAF hotline numbers are as follows: 0927 325 0644; 0905 225 3825; 0997 538 4008; 0917 206 3535; 0939 467 2761; 0919 9917239

EARLY LEARNING: A Springboard to a Disaster Prepared Community

It is said that we are living in the age of the “new normal” when extreme weather events like Ondoy, Yolanda and Lawin have become the norm as a result of climate change. These hazards cannot be stopped from happening but we can prevent them from becoming disasters. The war against disaster is not a sole responsibility of the government or any single agency but by everyone, including our children. Having this in mind, the Provincial Government of Isabela under the strong leadership of Governor Faustino “Bojje” Dy III, issued a directive to intensify the campaign on disaster preparedness province-wide. This has become the springboard disaster preparedness advocacy campaigns in the curriculum of the Child Development Center (CDC) of the province.

Initially, the Center is a day care center established by the province mainly for the children of its employees, however, after some time it was opened to everyone who wish to register their children aged 3 to 4 years old. It is a well-equipped facility that includes a playground, air-conditioned rooms and a tree-house conducive for alternative learning. Also, it is manned by highly trained child care professionals. What makes the center unique is the integration of disaster preparedness information campaign and simulation activities in their curriculum. The institution believes that children can become advocates and champions on DRRM by teaching them to become vigilant and responsive when faced with difficult situations. The teachings are inculcated through constant practice and simulation drills or “duck, cover and hold” and IEC which is strategically integrated during their story telling time, this way their attention and curiosity on the subjects presented is stirred. Disaster preparedness is added in the weekly program activity guide (WPAG) to guarantee that it will be imbibed by the child. According to teacher Loreine M. Reniedo, Child Development Worker, the saying “tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn” serves as a guide in achieving their desire of educating children on disaster preparedness.

Each child in the center is aware of necessary preparations during typhoons, they undergo regular earthquake drills and practice on the use of safety gears and gadgets which are available in the center. The teachings become apparent



Child Development Center, the day care center of the Province of Isabela. A 2015 GawadKalasag Awardee for the Best Early Learning Center in the Philippines.



Children's playground with the Child Development Center where the children can play and be able to develop interpersonal skills essential in their growth as future leaders.



Parents and guardians gathering together while waiting for the children. They form groups wherein they contribute for food and drinks. They also do community service together by maintaining the cleanliness and orderliness of the Child Development Center grounds.

during typhoons and as shared by one of the parents Marietta B. Baay, "During a typhoon signal warning, my daughter Irish who is only 3 years old reminds me to prepare the flashlights, emergency kit and she immediately checks her emergency bag".

It is also part of the program to include parents in the disaster preparedness advocacy by ensuring their participation in simulation drills, water-safety skills training and other DRRM activities. The program does not only develop the bond between parent and child but more importantly, it prepares them in cases of disaster. According to Ms Charmiya Rosalina L. Cruz, Focal Person of the CDC, "We have to educate our children and involving their parents is an assurance that the whole family is prepared during the onslaught of a disaster. We have to work as one," this way the family becomes the target of the advocacy.

"As parents and guardians to these children we are happy that our children are getting the best education for free which is provided by the Provincial Government, not only that, we see the progress in our children when it comes to disaster preparedness and because of that we feel a certain confidence that when worst scenarios happen they have



LGOOs II Rukmini Valencia and GmelinaManaligod interview the parents and guardians of 10AM-12Noon pupils regarding the children's manifestation of knowledge and learnings in disaster preparedness being taught in the Early Learning Center of the Province of Isabela.



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LGOO II Gmelina Manaligod asking a pupil what she learned at the day care center on disaster preparedness and what she does at home in times when calamities such as typhoons are approaching.

a knowledge on what to do," - Ms Dhorie Duey, guardian.

The CDC was awarded as the 2015 Gawad KALASAG for Best Early Learning Center in the Philippines. This award is conferred by the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council for exemplary contribution in the field disaster risk reduction and management. A moment not difficult to foresee according to Mr. Roger G. Domingo, Child Development Worker who shared, "We should start them young. Our children can act as advocates in educating our households in making sure that a culture of safety and preparedness is passed on to the next generation." Truly, it only takes a dream for a vision to become a reality and there is no better time than to start them young.



Interview with Mr. Roger C. Domingo, Day Care Worker. Mr. Domingo shared that we should start them young, children as advocates in educating households on safety and preparedness for disasters.



The pupils cover their heads while walking out of the room in single file during an earthquake drill.



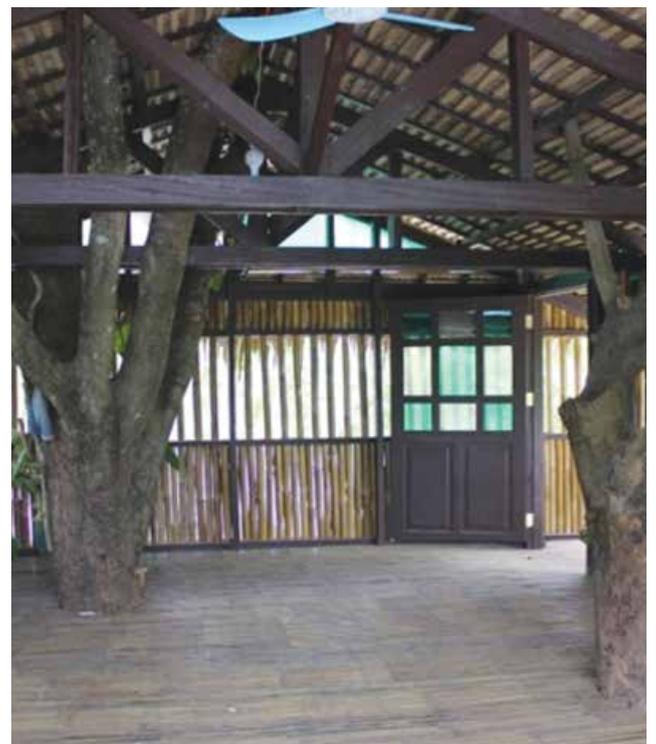
This tree house is used by the Child Development Center in powerful alternative learning strategies. Here, the pupils learn in a different environment making them more attentive and participative.



Whistles and helmets are provided by the PLGU of Isabela for the children to use when a disaster occurs. These simple yet effective tools give the children a better chance of survival if and when they are struck by a disaster.



Sprinkle system installed in the classroom. This system can help suppress fires that may occur inside the classroom.





A HERO AT THREE

Nobody was around except him and his dear Lola Adoracion.

It was past ten in the morning of July 2014 when a fire broke out inside their house. Instead of getting scared and running away to call for help, Edmund Jon Torrente Nipay or "EJ" as he is fondly called, instead made a fateful and unselfish decision of not leaving behind his disabled 60-year-old grandmother.

Unnerved by the unexpected tragedy, EJ mustered all his guts and strength to do a heroic act of saving the life of his wheelchair-bound lola come what may. From one hard push to another, huffing and puffing, EJ was able to bring his lola's wheelchair out of their burning bungalow house successfully. Both were unscathed and free from any injury. Thanks to the adrenalin rush, sheer determination and bravery of EJ.

"Tinulak ko po iyong wheelchair kasi po ayaw ko siyang mamatay," EJ told fire investigators and neighbors who came to their rescue. "Pag nangyari ulit iyon, gagawin ko pa rin ang ginawa ko para sagipin ang lola ko," EJ said, adding that

"kailangan po ng lola ko iyong salamin niya at cellphone para makahingi ng tulong kaya po bumalik ako para kunin ang mga iyon."

According to EJ's father, Edgardo, he and his wife Ana Rose left for the nearby Jones Public Market that morning to sell turon, okoy, banana cue, maruya and other snack foods. EJ's four siblings went to school. All of their neighbors were not around by that time. Some were already at the market to do business, unsuspecting that something would happen to the Nipay's dwelling.

Local fire investigators reported that there was power interruption on that day. They suspected that the sudden surge of electricity might have caused the loose wire connection between the defective convenience outlet and male plug of the television set to spark and ignite. The fire that started at the family's bedroom razed the house to the ground. Had it not for the insistence of EJ to stay and play at home instead of going to the market with his parents, his lola would not have survived the incident.



Fire out was declared at 1:15PM with an estimated cost of damage at Php200,000.00. Like fire, the news about EJ's bravery and courage spread quickly, from Jones to neighboring towns in the province of Isabela. Reached by the news, the Isabela Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office did not think twice of recognizing the heroic deed of EJ. Not only that, the Council immediately recommended EJ to be cited at the national level.



Eventually, EJ was chosen as one of the awardees of the 17th Annual Gawad KALASAG: Search for Excellence in Disaster Risk Reduction and Management and Humanitarian Assistance on May 02, 2016 at the Chardonay by Astoria, Pasig City.

The Provincial Government of Isabela under the leadership of Provincial Governor Faustino 'Bojie' Dy III followed suit. It conferred a Special Award plus Php60,000.00 to EJ as one of the Outstanding Isabeleños in May 2016.

Now at five, EJ is one of the kindergarten pupils at the Jones West Central School-Campus 2 located at Barangay 2, Jones, Isabela. His unforgettable experience inspires him to pursue his dream of becoming either as a rescuer or a policeman purposely to protect and save people. (With reports from BFP-Jones and MDRRMO-Jones)

JONES-MDRRMO LEADS THE WAY

Jones has prided itself to be included in the elite list of best performing municipalities in the whole country when it comes to disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction and management.

The town's Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (MDRRMO) was adjudged as one of the country's best for Calendar Year 2015 for its meritorious programs and accomplishments in saving lives and securing people in times of disasters and emergencies.

Municipal Mayor Leticia T. Sebastian, MDRRM Officer Jonas Tiburcio and other local officials and functionaries were all beaming with smiles when they climbed up the stage to receive a Plaque of Recognition and Php75,000.00 cash incentive during the awarding ceremonies on the occasion of the 17th Annual Gawad KALASAG: Search for Excellence in Disaster Risk Reduction and Management and Humanitarian Assistance held on May 02, 2016 at the Chardonnay by Astoria, Pasig City.

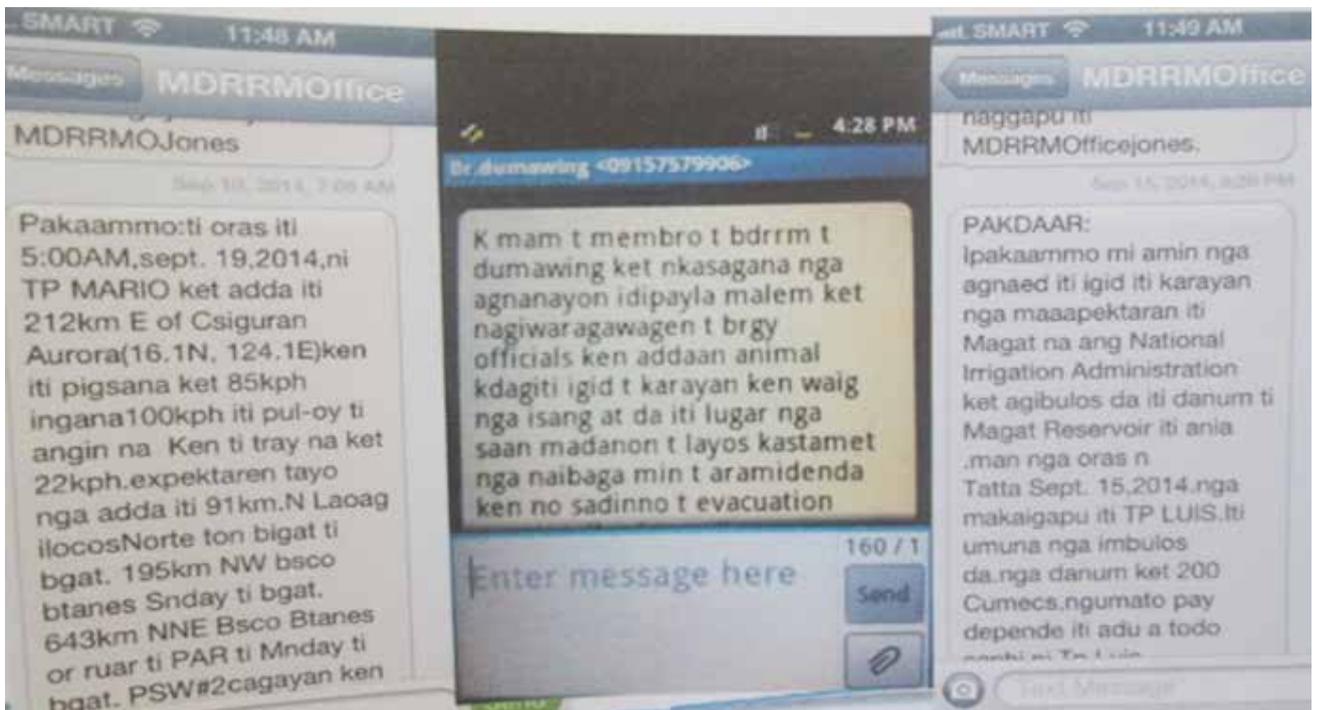
The event, organized by the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRRMC) through the Office of Civil Defense (OCD), was graced by Secretary of National Defense Voltaire T. Gazmin, Secretary of the Interior and Local Government Mel Senen S. Sarmiento and NDRRRMC Executive Director and Civil Defense Administrator Undersecretary Alexander P. Pama.

The municipality placed second to Hinatuan, Surigao del Sur under the award's 1st Class to 3rd Class Municipality Category. Isabela's Provincial DRRM Council placed first in the Provincial Category, besting the 88 other provinces of the country.

Tiburcio attributed the recognition of Jones-MDRRMO as one of the Philippines' best for the year to its various best practices which other local government units can replicate.

These include the utilization of Google Map as a tool for Early Warning System which later on evolved into a DRRM Information System. The system helps in the mapping of hazards like floods and landslides and affected barangays. It is used to inform the users on the kind of disaster and risk a particular barangay is exposed to and the necessary preparations





that residents have to take to mitigate the impact of the disaster.

The office has also been active in ensuring that constituents are well prepared and ready in times of disaster. It has put in place flood markers on bridges, installed water level monitoring system and institutionalized the ringing of bells as part of the municipality's Early Warning System. The office has also been using the local dialect which is Ilokano in delivering weather advisories to the people.

With the various awards that it has been receiving from the different bodies or institutions, Jones-MDRRMO does not intend to rest on its laurels. It continues to innovate and employ new strategies to make Jones "a disaster-resilient community founded on prospective, proactive, climate-adaptive, environment-friendly and God-fearing citizenry."



“Lubid” (Rope)

“When we were informed that a typhoon is coming, I rushed to the Municipal Public Market to buy some ropes to tie my stuffs, I was surprised to know that ropes were out of stock because almost everybody in town bought them to prepare for the typhoon.”

-Hon. Marcelina Pagbilao, Mayor of Saguday, Quirino



LGU-Saguday participants during the LISTO launching

On March 6, 2015, LGU-Saguday was one of the LGUs that participated in the Provincial Launching of Oplan LISTO in the province of Quirino. Among the six (6) municipalities of the province, Saguday passionately expressed that Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) binds and strengthens them, making their 5th class municipality see the beauty of being prepared before disasters at the same time changing the mindset of the people of Saguday. With utmost appreciation to the disaster programs of the DILG, the Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (LDRRMC), the constituents of LGU-Saguday saw the importance of planning to come up with appropriate interventions before, during and after disasters, from the problems encountered down to the situations yet to be experienced.

LGU-Saguday, Quirino, one of the first awardees of the Seal of Good Housekeeping (SGH)

of the DILG in 2010 patiently attended Disaster Risk Reduction and Management trainings conducted by the DILG in 2012-2014. These were the years when RA10121, otherwise known as the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010 was in full blast.

Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction Management (CBDRRM), one of the trainings conducted, urged trained LGUs to come up with hazard maps and evacuation route as outputs of their training in 2013. Not really appreciative of what are these outputs for, LGU-Saguday complied like obedient soldiers to the DILG.

Then came typhoon Chedeng in 2015, when Saguday received warnings from Office of the Civil Defense- Regional Office 02 through the Regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (RDRRMC), DILG-Ro2 Director down to Governors and Provincial Directors, and MILGOO. Reports showed that the typhoon will make a landfall in Aurora province, expected to cause great impacts and possible distractions to the province of Quirino, the LGU realized that the real action is here.

The MILGOO, PFP, PD, and RFP who served as their facilitators during their trainings never left the LGU unguarded. They were patiently giving advisories and updates with regard to the upcoming typhoon. Like cowboys who wanted to catch their horses, DILG personnel casts their ropes to tighten the trained LGU officials and functionaries and strengthened the bond of the Local Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (LDRRMC) members to respond to the demands of the typhoon.

Like a shepherd, the MILGOO prepared and gathered his herd to make sure that everyone is safe. For him, this is but another flood drill conducted by the Office of the Civil Defense which he had facilitated together with other government agencies. But this time, the effects are real. Still with sirens coming from the fire truck but with real heavy rains accompanied by genuine gust of wind hitting everybody's face and threatening everyone's property to be blown and destroyed. But nobody was hurt primarily because they were prepared.

Ropes were sold out in the market but nobody's life was strangled.

This is more rewarding to the MILGOO of Saguday who worked closely with the LGU, the Provincial Focal person who provided real time updates to the field and reports to the regional office, the Provincial Director who continuously guide the field officers, and the Regional Focal person who sees the impact of providing all the necessary technical assistance an LGU needs to prepare for and mitigate the effects of disaster.

Today, LGU-Saguday, Quirino embraced the challenge of the DILG to raise the bar of local governance. It is one of the recipients of the Seal of Good Local Governance (SGLG) in



The LDRRMC during the evacuation of residents



MILGOO and LCE gather the LDRRMC to prepare for the typhoon

2015, where Disaster Preparedness is one of the core areas and managed a recently completed Evacuation center, funded under the Bottom-Up-Budgeting of the DILG (BUB-DILG).

No matter where these achievements may lead them, LGU-Saguday is assured that their DILG, like ropes will always be there to tighten them when they felt blown by the wind and bind them when their

actions scatter like rain showers but never goes out of stock.

Disclaimer: This story represents the DILG RO2 personnel, most of the times exerting all efforts and sometimes sacrificing personal lives just to back up and push their respective LGUs to their maximum potential. A living example of Matino, Mahusay at Maaasahang kawani ng Kagawaran ng Interyor at Lokal na Pamahalaan.

